



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## OUR PHILADELPHIA LETTER.

If general prosperity may be inferred from the demand for the luxuries of life, the present season would seem to be the inauguration of a prosperous era. Never have our furniture men, upholsterers, and, indeed, all who cater to the taste for household decoration, been busier in this city than at present.

At some of the factories considerable extra force has been employed, and there is a real scarcity of truly good workmen, especially wood-workers, fit to be entrusted with the finer grades of hand-carving.

The windows of our leading upholsterers and decorative furnishers give evidence of the immense amount of care, and fertility of invention expended on the production of artistic designs, and there is a general activity and bustle about the trade that is rare at so early a date in the season. The effort is always after novelty, and it is not too much to say that the general result of this effort is in the direction of truer beauty, though it would seem that a time must soon arrive when invention will be worked out, and will, hence, degenerate.

There are some odd combinations in the newest styles of curtain material, and the problem which upholsterers seem to have set themselves to solve is how to retain rich and warm effects, and at the same time get back to lighter rooms. Everyone has noticed how the tendency of darker furnishing has grown during the past three or four years, the result being that, in escaping the Scylla of coldness, we are in imminent danger of going to smash on the Charybdis of sombreness. The revolt against the light-tinted walls and gold panelling, which a few years ago prevailed, had its origin in the desire for warmth—a desire especially natural in the case of libraries and small living-rooms. But the hangings have grown annually darker, until artistic people are beginning to see that our rooms are becoming gloomy. Hence the effort to get up hangings which shall retain the deep, rich colors in their figuring, but be relieved by lights and delicate grounds.

I note some quite new designs in embossed plush material on pale gold silk grounds; also in dark brown silk on very delicate canary-colored stuff of satin finish. The effect of the latter is exceedingly pleasing, but strikes one as almost too elegant for any other than a drawing room.

In paper hangings the variety is simply exhaustless, and the most ultra-minded householder may give rein to his fancies, without danger of violating any of the canons of existing fashion. So that he avoids plain panels, and sticks to his dado and frieze, he may do pretty much as he likes, and still remain within the pale of permissible decorative art.

Many of the styles of last summer are to be retained, while many new ones are to be added. Among the former are the Greek figures, mythological and illustrative, which make so charming a design for a library frieze.

It is probable that the general coloring of friezes and dados will approach more closely than last year, to the coloring of the body of the walls. Our best dealers are advising a less violent contrast.

This same tendency is noticeable in furniture. There is less of the juxtaposition of light and dark woods, and where a room is furnished in an ebonized set, the accepted taste will exclude even a foot-stool of walnut or cherry. The inlaying of

light wood in dark, and *vice versa*, seems to be on the wane, though still resorted to as a means of ornament by many makers.

Our furniture men seem to be anticipating a brisk demand for all grades, and many of them are busy with orders which will run them for some time to come.

Messrs. George W. Smith & Co. are making twenty cases for the Government, intended to contain the National Exhibit at the Exhibition of the International Fish Commission, to be held next year in London. These cases, though not showy, are of very fine workmanship, and are constructed with especial reference to the nature of their pros-

The same firm have at their factory several novelties, among which I have been shown an elegant side-board, destined for a dining room of a well-known Philadelphia clergyman. It is devoid of ornament even to the point of rigid simplicity, but is imposing by reason of its shape and fine proportions. Its novelty consists in its being bottomless for about one-third of its length, the intention being to cut a hole in the floor beneath it, and introduce a dumb-waiter communicating with the kitchen below.

Those very useful articles known as teapoy tables, which have been nearly out of use for a generation, are attaining their old-time popularity.

The queer, lacquered surfaces of the tables which some of us inherited from our grandmothers, have, however, given place to stands of plain oiled wood, cherry apparently being the favorite, and the most approved of the new shape is triangular, with a slender leg at each corner. The tables are in nests of three, instead of four or five, as formerly.

It is probably to the fashion of afternoon teas that the revival of teapoy is due.

Furniture coverings remain much the same as last season, but there will be some novelties later. Indeed, the cooler weather which will come with another month, will do much to bring forward further designs in all branches, and, it is hoped, plenty of buyers to appreciate them.

## SCREEN DESIGN.

(See Opposite Page.)

THE Screen on opposite page is a suitable design to be painted on canvas or satin, or to be worked in crewels. If painted on canvas, the background should be kept light in tone, to give prominence to the grasses, etc., in the foreground. The grasses should be painted in their natural colors, the heads a warm brown, and the blades a brownish green. The upper panel has branches of the *Cephalanthus*, or Buttonbush, against the sky. It is a shrub that grows on the banks of brooks and ponds, in localities where you find the grasses and the water-lily. The larger balls in the cluster of flowers, are creamy white, the smaller ones have a decidedly greenish tint. Each ball is a compact mass of very small flowers, so close as to be hardly distinguishable.

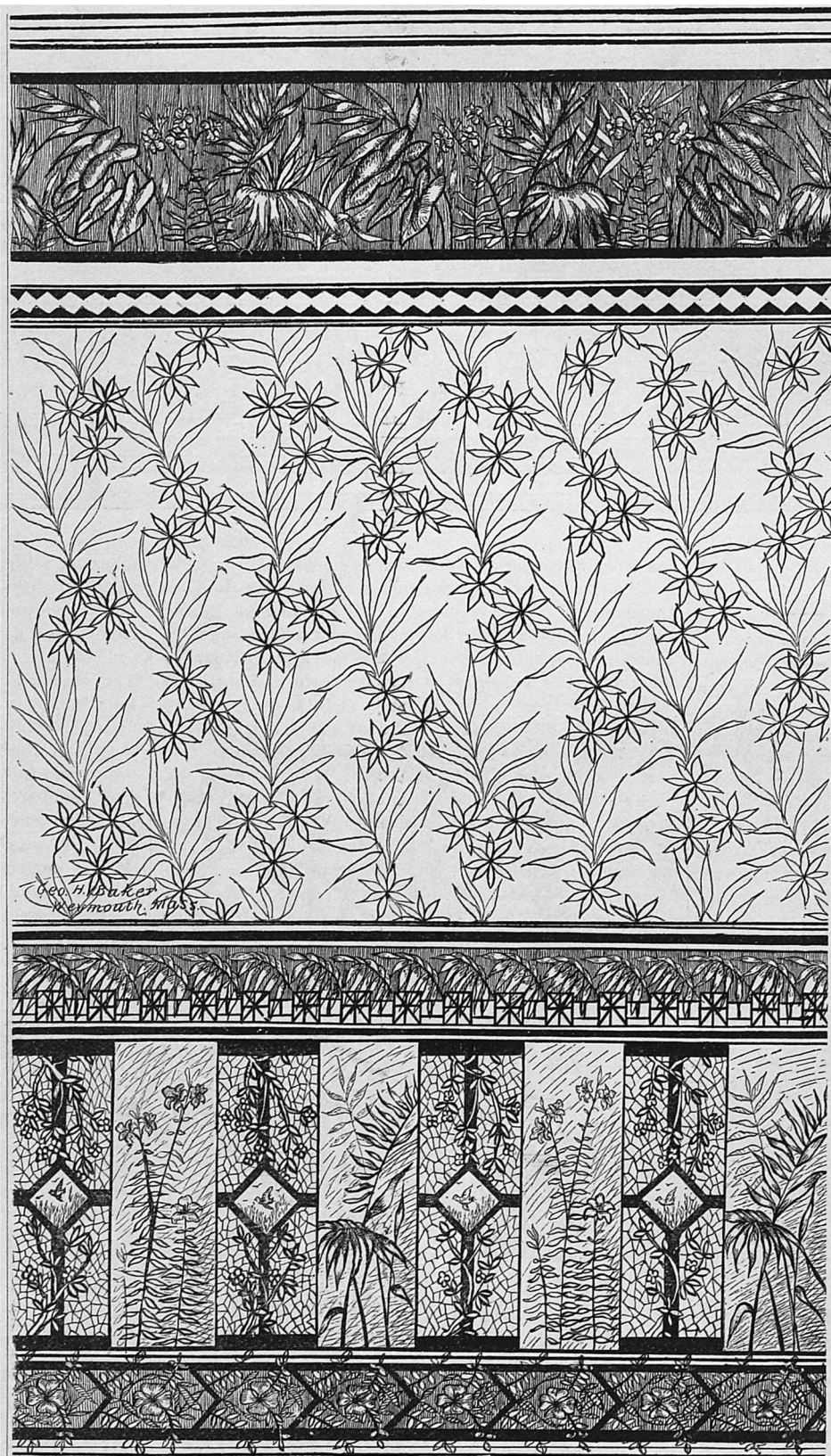
If painted on satin, that of a light blue shade would be very suitable, as it could represent the sky. Distant trees and shore should be suggested by a few lines, but not covered with a body of paint. If worked in crewels, the same colors could be used as suggested for painting.

MISS E. L. SWAN,  
Providence, R. I.

TO ARCHITECTS.—We solicit communications from those who are engaged upon, or know of any new and attractive interiors. We would be glad to receive a sketch or description of such, giving style, treatment and material.

TO DESIGNERS.—Our purpose, so far as possible, is to notice all the new designs for furniture, decorations, draperies, &c., and we will rely, to some extent, upon the kindness and thoughtfulness of designers and furnishers, for information that will give us these particulars.

TO ARTISTS.—From artists we solicit original sketches for furniture, panels, plaques, screens, fans, wood carvings, carpets, oil cloths, wall paper, ceramics, &c. &c.



The prevailing color in this design is terra cotta.

The Dado: The ground of the darker panels is a deep shade of terra cotta, the vine in two shades lighter, the network over it in gilt. The small squares in the centre are dull steel blue; the birds in terra cotta; the ground of the alternating panels, is a dull steel blue and leaves in sage greens; the lilies in white. The lining around the panels, same shade as the background of the dark panels.

The Paper is a medium shade of terra cotta, with the figure in a tracery of gold.

The Frieze: The ground is of dark terra cotta, with the leaves in sage greens and lighter shades of terra cotta; lilies in same light shades.

The whole is designed for a dining room, with wood work painted in shades to match.

GEO. H. BAKER, Weymouth, Mass.

pective contents, i.e., specimens of fish, fishery implements, and all the paraphernalia of the industry. It is agreeable to know that whatever rank we may attain in the International competition, we shall, at least, send to London an excellent specimen of American cabinet making. The wood used is mahogany; the hardware nickel-plated.



